

## [A Wandering Clockmaker]

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[?]

George Troland,

Yankee,

Grand street

Mr. [?] Troland, [adjuster?] by trade, has been engaged for 35 years at his work in practically every clock factory in the state except that in Winsted. It was my thought that he might be representative of a [?] peculiar type—the clockmaker who doesn't stay 'put' but who is constantly shuttling back and forth [?] in an over-decreasing [?] area of clock industry. Opportunities for employment for this type, who might in the old days have been compared to the itinerant printer in many ways, are rapidly narrowing and many are forced to remain where they are who [?] would in more propitious "times" head the call of greener pastures.

Mr. Troland's [?] son is an ear-timer and adjuster. I found them together. Said Mr Troland:

"I worked in most of them. In Sessions, Ingrahams, Seth Thomas, [Waterbury?] Clock, [? ?]—I don't know how I missed Winsted. I worked at the Waterbury Clock Company three times. In the old days it used to be easy to get a job anywhere if you were a good clockmaker, and if your record was good you could always go back. Even if it wasn't so good, you could go back, if they needed a man. Some of them used to be pretty heavy drinkers. They'd go on a bat and wouldn't come back to work, and finally they'd just pick up and go to some other clock [?] shop and get a job.

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"I used to work with a guy named Gene [?] Herbert, and he told me he had a chance to go to [Japan?] once, what do you think of that? Seems he was working up in Waltham and this Jap came up there and wanted to have somebody go back with him and Gene was going to get the chance. They were to make the parts in Waltham and assemble them in Japan. But something went wrong, and it never [went?] through.

"Then a couple of years ago, the Russians came over to Bristol to study clock and watch manufacture, and some of the [?] boys got a 3 chance to go to Russia. I don't know if any of them went or not, seems to me they did.

"I used to work for the Waterbury Clock Company before they started making Ingersolls. I saw old man Ingersoll many a time—he was a little bit of a short guy, kind of nervous and [?] quick acting. Then they bought Ingersoll out.

"There used to be a lot of shifting around. I never got out of the state, [?] myself, but I worked with plenty of men from the other big factories, Waltham, [?] Elgin, Hamilton—if you were a good watch or clockmaker you could get a job in any of those [?] places. You had to know your business, or you didn't get by."

Troland Junior: "Over at my place things are a little different. If a spring has too many coils here they call it a 'soft spring.' Over in Ingraham's they call it a 'stiff spring.'

Troland Senior: "Well, every shop is different. Over there the first wheel starts from the center; over here its from the escapement; so that what's your first wheel over there would be your second wheel in Seth Thomas. You find little differences like that, but they don't amount to much. It's confusing when you first to to work in a place, after you've been used to doing [?] things another way. But you soon get used to it. [?] Troland Junior: "We call the off-timers 'cuckoos.'

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Troland Senior: "A lad came to me one time and he said all ear timers were cuckoos. He said all you have to do is hold your finger up in front of them and they laugh."

(Off-timers are clocks which have been times and still are not precise. In other words they must be timed over again.)

Troland Senior: "When I first worked in Waterbury, there wasn't any Lux Clock Company. You know how Lux got his start? He sent to Germany for 4 [?] clocks and he used to peddle them around to saloons and other places like that. You see some of those old clocks in Drescher and Keck's and other places like that in Waterbury, Lux sold them. Now don't use my name on any of this stuff."